1:Dobrizhoffer M-S (ca. 1760) 1822
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101 nation, and used a separate language. In the
619 last century, the Spaniards, whom they had gone out to slaughter, surprized them by the way, and almost destroyed them all. A few who survived the massacre, with the widows and children of the slain, joined the neighbouring Abipones, and both nations, by inter-marriages, coalesced into one; the old language of the Yaaucanigas falling into disuse. The Abi-
619 ponian tribes pursue the same manner of life, and their customs and language, with the exception of a few words, are alike. Wondrous
[618] unanimity, and a constant alliance in arms, reigned amongst them as long as they had to deal with the Spaniards, against whom, as against a mutual foe, they bear an innate hatred, and whose servitude they resist with united strength. But though bound by the ties of consanguinity and friendship, impatient of the
[578] smallest injury, they eagerly seize on any occasion of war, and frequently weaken each other with mutual slaughter.

595 Like the other American savages, some of the
586 Abipones practise polygamy and divorce. Yet they are by no means numerous; the whole
161 nation consisting of no more than five thousand people. Intestine skirmishes, excursions against the enemy, the deadly contagion of the

h [i.e., the Yaaucanigas, a group of Abipon. – Analyst]

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measles and small-pox, and the cruelty of the mothers towards their offspring, have combined to render their number so small. Now learn the cause of this inhumanity in the women. The mothers suckle their children for three years, during which time they have no conjugal intercourse with their husbands, who, tired of this long delay, often marry another wife. The women, therefore, kill their unborn babes through fear of repudiation, sometimes getting rid of them by violent arts, without waiting for their birth. Afraid of being widows in the lifetime of their husbands, they blush not to become more savage than tigresses. Mothers spare their female offspring more frequently than the males, because the sons, when grown up, are obliged to purchase a wife, whereas daughters, at an age to be married, may be sold to the bridegroom at almost any price.

From all this you may easily guess that the Abiponian nations abound more in women than in men, both because female infants are seldomer killed by their mothers, because the women never fall in battle as is the case with the men, and because women are naturally longer lived than men. Many writers make the mistake of attributing the present scanty population of America to the cruelty of the Spaniards, when they should rather accuse that

The first missionaries to visit the *Abipón* were the Jesuit Fathers Juan Fonte and Francisco de Angulo, who in 1591 baptised the children in the bands living near Concepción on the Bermejo River. In 1593 Fathers Alonso de Bárzana and Pedro de Añasco were sent to convert the *Mataró* and the *Guaicurues* tribes of the same region. Their missionary work lasted only 2 years and produced few results. However, Bárzana found time to write a grammar and a vocabulary of the *Abipón* language. In 1641 Fathers Juan Pastor and Gaspar Arqueyra made a brief sojourn among the *Abipón* of the Bermejo River.

The example of the *Mocoví* who had accepted Jesuit missionaries facilitated the conclusion of a peace treaty between the Spaniards and some of the *Abipón* bands. In 1746 the Jesuits founded the *Abipón* mission of San Jerónimo, which today is the prosperous city of Reconquista. The mission of Concepción was established in 1749 on the Inospin River and was later transferred to the junction of the Río Dulce with the Río Salado. San Fernando was built in 1750 on the Río Negro at the place of the present city of Resistencia. Timbó, or Rosario, on the Paraguay River (lat. 26°32' S., long. 58°17' W.), was inaugurated in 1762. The missionized *Abipón* were constantly harassed by the *Toba* and *Mocoví*.

The history of the *Abipón* after the expulsion of the Jesuits is somewhat confused. For many years they waged war against the *Toba* and *Mocoví*, who destroyed the missions of San Fernando and Timbó. In 1770 the *Abipón* of San Jerónimo and some other bands migrated to the eastern side of the Paraná River, at Las Garzas and Goya, to escape the inroads of the *Toba* and *Mocoví*. Some of the *Abipón* who had settled on the left bank of the Paraná River joined bands of marauders who were raiding the farms around Corrientes, Goya, and Vajada. *Abipón* warriors served under the famous leader, Artigas.

Little is known about the fate of the *Abipón* bands who even before the expulsion of the Jesuits had returned to the bush. Some of them tried to settle on their former territory on the Bermejo River, which had been occupied by the *Toba* and *Mocoví*. Rengger (1835, p. 343) speaks of constant skirmishes in which the *Abipón*, *Mocoví*, and *Toba* fought Paraguayan outposts. But, in spite of the continuous warfare along the frontier, the *Abipón* used to visit Asunción to dispose of the cattle stolen in the south. The advance of the military posts in the Chaco during the 19th century restricted their hunting grounds and made life more difficult for them, forcing numerous bands into submission. Many *Abipón* were slaughtered and others were absorbed into the Creole population. In 1858 there were still some *Abipón* in a reduction called Savez, between Santa Fé and Córdoba (Lafone-Quevedo, 1896 d, p. 89). It is not altogether impossible that some more or less pureblooded *Abipón* may still be found in the Chaco wilderness.

Population of the Abipón.—About 1750 the *Abipón* tribe consisted of three large subgroups: The *Kokoisipotpeka* (Forest People), the *Riikaka* (People of the Open Country), and the *Yacahaisipé* (Water People). According to Dobrizhoffer (1784, 2:336), the whole tribe numbered about 5,000. The population decreased rapidly after contact with the Spaniards. In 1767 there were 2,000 *Abipón* distributed in the four Jesuit missions.

Mocoví (*Mocobí, Mocobíes, Mogosnas, Amikebit, Frentones*).—The original home of the *Mocoví* was probably the plains between the upper Bermejo River and the Río Salado, near the *Toba*, their close relatives and frequent allies.

In the 17th century they are frequently listed among the "wild Indians" who roamed along the borders of the Province of Tucumán. At the beginning of the